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ABSTRACT

This paper examines effects of public funding for religious and private schools in the Netherlands and England over the last century. These two countries were chosen because both have religious schools fully funded by the state. The paper shows that state funding has disadvantages and advantages. Funding has been associated with considerable, yet variable, state control and regulation over such aspects as curriculum, staff, and governance. At various points in the past, both governments have effected powerful shocks to the religious schools that have received funding. There has also been a gradual increase in regulation, especially since the 1990s. This increase in state regulation and control is such that now some religious schools in both countries do not seek state funding but prefer to remain dependent on fees. The benefits of state funding are seen as being outweighed by the decrease in autonomy. A final twist is that private schools not receiving state funding have also experienced increased state regulation at both the country and European levels. Furthermore, all schools have also been influenced by issues of standards and league tables that have brought pressure to conform to a narrow version of schooling. (Contains 57 references.) (Author)

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Occasional Paper No. 8

National Center for the Study of Privatization in Education

Teachers College, Columbia University

Funding for Private Schools in England and the Netherlands. Can the Piper Call the Tune?

Geoffrey Walford*

November 2000

Abstract This paper examines the effects of public funding for religious and private schools in the Netherlands and England over the last century or more. These two countries are chosen because both have religious schools which are fully funded by the state and the Netherlands, in particular, is often seen as providing an ideal environment in which private religious schools can flourish. The paper shows that state funding brings disadvantages as well as advantages, for funding has been associated with considerable, yet variable, state control and regulation over such aspects as curriculum, staffing, admissions criteria, inspection and governance. At various points in the past both governments have effected powerful shocks to the religious schools that have received funding, and there has also been a gradual increase in regulation - especially in the last decade *(abstract continues below).*

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This increase in state regulation and control is such that there are now some religious schools in both countries which do not seek state funding but refer to remain dependent upon fees. The benefits of state funding are seen as being outweighed by the decrease in autonomy that the schools would undergo. A final twist, however, is that private schools not in receipt of state funding have also experienced increased state regulation at both the country and European levels. Furthermore, all schools have also been influenced by the growing public rhetoric of 'standards' and 'league tables' which has brought with it a growing pressure to conform to a narrow version of schooling. Diversity is being replaced by conformity.

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Introduction

Over the last few decades there has been growing pressure in the United States and elsewhere for some form of financial support for private schools. Advocates commonly base their arguments on the perceived need for greater diversity of provision, the assumed greater efficiency and effectiveness of the private sector, and the simple right of parents to have their children educated in schools of their choosing. Why, the argument goes, should parents have to 'pay twice' for schooling if they want to use a particular type of schooling? Other advocates have been interested in less individualistic equity issues and have claimed that supporting the private sector through well-targeted schemes could lead to greater ethnic and class equality. In a country such as the US that has a separation between 'Church and State' the argument has focused particularly around the issue of faith-based schools and ways in which such schools might obtain financial support from the state. Vouchers have been seen as one way by which it might be claimed that the state could support individual children rather than the schools themselves, but many have simply looked at the various ways in which schools are funded in other countries and asked 'why not here as well?' Most European countries have mixed systems of schooling where children are able to attend schools provided by a variety of different suppliers - usually religious organizations - which are funded in large part by the state. In England, for example, children can attend Roman Catholic, Anglican and Jewish schools and pay no school fees, while in countries such as the Netherlands or Denmark the variety of state-funded schools is even greater.

In attempting to generate support for a change in policy, it is unsurprising that advocates should emphasize aspects of the educational systems of other countries that support their case. Those promoting wider state-funding are unlikely to stress any potential problems that such funding might bring, yet any rational argument should consider the

drawbacks as well as the advantages. It would be tragic to be successful in obtaining funding only to find that such funding brings more problems than it solves.

Yet in many of the debates on state funding for a wider variety of schools, one aspect that is often omitted from consideration is the possible relationship between funding and greater accountability and control. Clearly schools gain financially from state support, but what do they loose? What strings are attached to funding? To what extent is the tune played by the piper modified by he who pays? Is the tune still recognizable?

This paper will examine some of the constraints under which religious and other non-state provided schools operate in England and the Netherlands. It will not be able directly to answer questions about what might be the effects of state funding in the USA, for the economic, social and cultural history of the USA differs greatly from both of these European countries and the details of funding and regulation are central to any positive or negative effects. Instead, it will offer a commentary on some past and present developments in those two countries on which US advocates and their opponents might ponder.

An historical outline of the English and Dutch educational systems

The present cannot be understood apart from the past. In Europe the present educational systems of each country are the product of centuries of political and economic struggle and compromise. What is central to remember is that while state-supported mass schooling is only a century or two old, many individual schools have histories dating back far longer. In most of Europe the history of schooling is not one of privatization, but of the gradual incorporation of the private sector into the state sector.

In England, for example, before the nineteenth century the education of children was considered to be the private affair of parents. All schools, apart from a very few in

workhouses, were private or charitable schools. Those with sufficient means could employ private tutors for their children or send them to a variety of grammar or other fee-paying schools, but schooling of the poor, if they had any at all, was in dame schools and charity schools. The charity school movement can be said to have started with the founding of the Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge (SPCK) in 1698 (Morrish, 1970), whose schools were intended to restore morals and religious belief to the poor children of what was then seen as an increasingly degenerate country. The schools were supported by the churches, both through direct charitable donations and through the local clergy often teaching in the schools for no fee. As urbanization and industrialization progressed, the somewhat contradictory drives of philanthropy, religious conviction, and the practical need for a better educated and disciplined work force led to the gradual expansion of a network of schools for the poor.

The English government was reluctant to become involved in the provision of schooling, preferring to leave it to the various churches and other charitable organizations. The government was equally reluctant to regulate such schools so that they were allowed to do whatever they wished so long as they did not contradict the wider laws of the land. The first formal involvement of the state in education was the Health and Morals of Apprentices Act of 1802, which forced employers to provide for the teaching of apprentices during the working day and for at least an hour on Sundays. This was followed by two parliamentary committees in 1816 and 1818 which attempted to survey the extent and nature of elementary education available for the 'lower orders' (Musgrave, 1968). As expected, the report chronicled 'grave deficiencies in general provision, accommodation and actual teaching', but the resulting first attempt to establish a national education system failed completely, as it became embroiled in a controversy with the churches over control. The Church of England

wanted overall control of any new system. Not surprisingly, the Roman Catholic and other Protestant Churches objected.

The next move to establish a national system was made in 1833. This failed as well, but it did lead to the first grant of £20,000 being made by government to aid 'private subscription for the erection of school houses'. This grant was given to the two main religious providers of schooling at the time - the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor and the British and Foreign School Society. Grants to build schools gradually increased over the century and an Education Department was established in 1856 to control this funding. By this time, the Victorian government of the day recognized the need to ensure that education was provided, but was still happy to leave this to the charitable and religious organizations wherever possible, and would only help financially where other sources were insufficient.

It was only following the 1870 Education Act that the State became involved in the provision, maintenance and organization of its own elementary schools. A national system was established, but one where responsibility for provision was still shared by a multitude of providers. The key 1944 Education Act for England and Wales built upon this existing understanding. Coming into law while the war was still in progress, it promised a brighter and fairer future to all children irrespective of social class. The slogan 'secondary education for all' meant that all children would leave their elementary or primary schools at age eleven and move on to secondary schools that were supposedly appropriate for their differing abilities and aptitudes (Simon, 1991). In most places, the Local Education Authorities (LEAs), that were given responsibility for implementing the new system, developed two or three different types of school to which children were directed according to the results of an 11 plus selection examination. But another cross-cutting factor was the religious orientation

of the students and the schools. Many of the pre-existing secondary schools had been founded by the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church. To make it possible to provide secondary schooling for all children it was seen as necessary to include as many as possible of these schools into the state-maintained sector. While some religious schools remained as full private schools, the majority entered into arrangements with the state in one of three categories - voluntary controlled, voluntary aided, or special agreement. The main distinction between the three was the degree of control that the Governors maintained over the school and the size of the financial contribution expected from the Churches in return for this remaining control. While these schools retained their religious denominational character, they became an integral part of the state maintained local authority system. They were state-maintained, but the property was still owned by the Churches and, at least in theory, they could return to full private status if they ever wished to do so. Within this academically selective system there were grammar schools and secondary modern schools provided both by the religious providers and by the local education authorities.

During the 1960s and 1970s the selective system of secondary schooling was gradually replaced by comprehensive schools, still provided by the churches and charitable organizations together with the local education authorities (Simon, 1997). By 1979 about 90 per cent of secondary age children in the state-maintained sector were in comprehensive schools. There were about 28 per cent of primary aged pupils in schools not provided by the state, and 17 per cent of secondary pupils. Over all ages, 22 per cent of pupils were in these voluntary schools, which was made up of 11 per cent Church of England, nine per cent Roman Catholic, and less than one per cent each of Jewish and Methodist (O'Keeffe, 1986). Additionally, nearly two per cent of pupils were in non-religious voluntary schools that were originally established by guilds and charities. A further eight per cent of school age children

were in full private schools, most of which were originally established by church related groups or individuals.

Definitions are a constant problem in discussing English schooling. Apart from the perverse and now dated use of the term 'public' to describe some of the major private schools, the official term for private schools in England is actually 'independent'. However, this is a misleading term, as none of these schools are fully independent of the state - either in funding or control. In terms of funding most schools receive indirect help from government in the form of tax relief and other concessions (Robson and Walford, 1988) while, as the final section of this paper illustrates, the degree of control that the government exerts on so called independent schools is considerable and increasing.

The distinction between private and public has often been blurred, and never more so than with the group of mainly religiously-based direct grant schools which received a grant from central government in exchange for offering a set proportion of places to children who passed the 11 plus. These direct grant schools were a good example of the difficulty of definition. They were officially private schools that had entered into an agreement with the government to give free places to academically able children, yet they also accepted fee-paying children into the same classes (Walford, 1990). They also provide an interesting example of the process of incorporation of religiously-based private schools into the state-maintained sector and the resulting non-material costs to the schools.

These schools were not created to be a separate and distinct group at all, but were to have functions similar to other secondary schools that received some support from the state. They came about in 1926. Prior to that date secondary schools controlled by voluntary bodies could receive grants from central government, from local government, or from both. Circular 1381 in 1926 simplified this situation by ensuring that schools could receive grants

from central government or local government, but not from both. The direct grant schools were simply those private secondary schools that after that date received their grant direct from central government. In practice, the degree of control exerted on them from central government was less than that exerted on similar schools by local governments. Following the depression of the 1930s, many of these schools were not in a good financial state by the start of the war. This weakness led to their further control and loss of autonomy. The desire to offer secondary education to all led to a major change through the 1944 Education Act when the 231 schools at that time receiving direct grant were given the choice of continuing the direct grant on new terms, joining the maintained sector, or reverting to full private status with no grant. Most accepted the new terms (which broadly followed those of the Flemming Committee (1944)) under which the schools were required to have at least 25 per cent of pupils on free places mainly financed by the local education authorities, but some paid from foundation income or through higher fees for the remaining fee-paying pupils. The local education authorities also had the right to pay for a further 25 per cent of places, and could go beyond this if the governors agreed. In practice, the schools became increasingly dependent on the grant aided places, and by 1969, for example, more than half the schools had more than half of their pupils on free places. Even the fee-payers did so on an income-related scale with the government paying the difference between what they paid and the full fee.

In 1969 there were 179 direct grant schools, and they educated about 3 per cent of the secondary school population, but 10 per cent of those still in school aged 16-18. All but one was academically selective and, in practice, many of the schools were treated by pupils and parents as part of the state-maintained sector. They served the function of the local grammar school, especially for Roman Catholics. By this time only 28 per cent paid full fees

and a further 9 per cent paid partial fees. This close association with the maintained sector led to their demise in 1975 as the then Labour government wished to move to a comprehensive scheme. It phased out the direct grant more to end selection than as a direct attack on the direct grant. Schools were given the choice of becoming comprehensive or returning to full private status. By 1978 some 60 out of the then 178 schools had chosen to become comprehensive, while the remainder had chosen the full private route no doubt hoping that a future conservative government might restore some sort of grant in due course. The majority of those going comprehensive were Roman Catholic schools, who did so partly because the Roman Catholic hierarchy supported the move towards comprehensive education. But they were also forced to do so because their prior dependence on state funding meant that they were unlikely to survive in the private sector. For many of these schools this meant a distinct forced change in mission for they had often been originally established in order to provide a pathway to university for Catholic children. Foundation capital was often specifically given so that the income could be used to support poor, but academically able, children. While they remained Catholic schools, they were forced to accept a position within the state-maintained with which many of those involved in the schools disagreed.

Various Education Acts for England and Wales have been a battle field between government and representatives of the churches, and it is worth remembering that until 1999 there were 26 Spiritual Lords in the House of Lords who could cause considerable problems for any government intent on gaining greater control over schooling. The 1980 Education Act was one such battle, where parents and teachers were introduced into every school governing body. The change meant that, while voluntary aided schools still had a majority of governors from the foundation, they did not have the two-thirds that had been guaranteed

under the 1944 Education Act (Francis, 2000). This Act also forced the schools to give more information to parents and ensured that all schools had a fair admissions process.

The 1986 Education (No.2) Act required the governors to meet each year with parents, and provided a way by which voluntary controlled schools might become voluntary aided. This last change was of potential benefit to the churches, but the financial cost of such a move meant that few schools actually took advantage of the change. The 1988 Education Act, with its introduction of grant-maintained schools was perceived by many as an indirect challenge to the control of the churches. If a voluntary aided school opted to become grant-maintained (which it could do against the wishes of the governors), the churches no longer had to pay 15 per cent of capital expenditure. However, the National Society and the General Synod of the Board of Education were suspicious and gave the warning: 'The absence of any continuing financial input from the church could strengthen the arm of any future government wishing to abolish church schools' (National Society, 1988).

The Dutch system of school provision must similarly be understood in the light of its history. Of particular importance to supporters of a wider diversity of schools supported by the state is that in the Netherlands all schools are funded by the state on an equal basis, and that about two-thirds of all primary and secondary pupils are taught within what are officially known as private schools. It is open for any group of parents or others to apply to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science to establish new schools and, if the relevant criteria are met, these new schools become state-funded. This means that, in addition to the state schools organized by the state municipalities, the Netherlands has Roman Catholic and Protestant Christian schools, Islamic, Hindu and Jewish schools. There are also several private secular schools which promote particular educational philosophies such as

Montessori, Dalton, Jenaplan and Freinet schools (MECS, 1998). A central feature of the Dutch system that differs dramatically from that in England, is that all school buildings are supplied and owned by the state. In England, any organization wishing to start a new school has to find at least 15 per cent of the costs, and the buildings of former private schools have often been incorporated for use within the state-maintained system at no cost to the state. In the Netherlands promoters do not have to have any private funding - both the capital and recurrent costs are covered.

But aspects of the Dutch system that are so attractive to supporters of diversity cannot be understood in isolation. The nature and structure of Dutch education must be examined in the context of the wider historical, religious and political features of Dutch society. The state became involved with education far earlier than in England with the Dutch Elementary Schools Act being passed in 1801. Indeed, James (1989) argues that 'the evolution of the Dutch system of primary and secondary education is unique in the Western World' in that it moved from a relatively secular state monopoly at the beginning of the nineteenth century to a highly pluralistic, largely religiously based system by the beginning of the twentieth century. This is the direct opposite of the English case.

Geographically, the Netherlands has few natural boundaries on the east and south, and the current political boundaries follow the defeat of Napoleon, the creation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in 1814, and the subsequent withdrawal of Belgium from the Kingdom in 1839. This division left Belgium relatively homogeneous religiously but divided linguistically, and the Netherlands relatively homogeneous linguistically, but divided religiously (Andeweg & Irwin, 1993). The basic cleavage between Roman Catholic and Protestant became more complex during the nineteenth century as divisions within the Dutch Reformed church occurred and, led by such people as Abraham Kuyper, groups of

orthodox Calvinist Protestants broke away from the theologically liberal Dutch Reformed Church to form their own churches (Vanden Berg, 1978). These 'little men' (*de kleine luyden*), who were often small shopkeepers, clerks, artisans and similar, eventually formed the Rereformed (Gereformeerde) churches. These three religious groups eventually became associated with political parties and, with the addition of a further party that developed from the socialist workers' movement and another based upon the relatively affluent Liberals (who held power until universal suffrage), still form the basis of the five current main political parties in the Netherlands.

This has meant that the Netherlands is a country of political minorities, and minorities that entertain no hope of becoming majorities (Andeweg & Irwin, 1993). From 1917, when universal suffrage and proportional representation were introduced, none of the five major political parties has ever had an outright majority, or even been very near to doing so. Not only are the political parties minorities in statistical terms, they can be identified with particular minority groups that have developed historically within the Netherlands. Unlike most other European countries, these political parties are divided along two dimensions. First, there is a version of the usual 'left' versus 'right' socio-economic dimension that is related to the desired degree of intervention of the state into the economy, social affairs, income distribution and so on. Second, is a religious dimension that is particularly important in social, cultural and ethical areas. This religious dimension was more important than the socio-economic dimension for most of the first half of this century.

Although Roman Catholics had never been banned, they were only given the right to establish their own schools in 1848, and the Church hierarchy was only re-established in 1853. The Catholics then joined with the growing number of Gereformeerde churches to seek state support for religious schools on an equal basis to state provided schools. The

funding of such schools became one of the two major issues in the nineteenth century Netherlands, and was only finally resolved in the new 1917 Constitution when a Catholic-Calvinist majority coalition led to the 'Pacification' which introduced social reform, universal suffrage and the right to state funding for religious schools.

That such a change to the education system should be intertwined with issues of social justice and universal suffrage is an indication of the 'pillarisation' of Dutch society that existed at the time and thrived until the late 1960s. The minority groups were not simply linked to the five political parties, but were organized social groups or sub-cultures that affected very many aspects of everyday life. At its strongest, for Catholics in the 1950s for example, the 'pillar' included separate hospitals, social services, television channels, newspapers, schools, universities, trades unions and employers' organizations. A Catholic 'would have lived his or her life within the confines of a homogeneous Catholic subculture and its organizational infrastructure' (Andeweg & Irwin, 1993: 29).

In the first half of this century pillarisation was particularly encouraged by the Roman Catholic hierarchy and the Gereformeerde churches, and less so by the Dutch Reformed Church and the other two political party groupings. It led to a situation of introversion and isolation within subcultures and distrust and hostility between the subcultures. However, Lijphart (1975) argues that, although heavily pillarised, the Dutch system was stable because there was cooperation at the elite level at the same time as segmentation at the mass level. By accepting a number of ground rules that emphasize compromise and consensus, the various groups are able to co-exist fruitfully. Thus concepts such as the agreement to disagree, executive power sharing, the right of veto for minorities, and proportionality are central to the political culture and accepted by virtually all. Where compromise cannot be achieved any decisions are usually avoided altogether. Lijphart argues

that this last factor is particularly important in terms of ensuring stability, but that it inhibits the society's ability to develop.

But pillarisation is no longer the strength that it was. Increasing secularism and materialism, along with a greater internationalism, have meant that since the late 1960s there have been great changes in Dutch society. In particular, the importance of religion has waned. By the late 1980s some 30 per cent of Dutch people stated that they had no belief in God and only some 40 per cent claimed to attend a church service at least once a month. In Britain the comparable figures were 20 per cent and 23 per cent (Inglehart, 1990: 188). Except for those in the Gereformeerde churches, religion no longer has such a strong hold. Moreover, pillarisation is no longer encouraged by the Dutch elite, which has led to greater linkages between different providers of social services, education and so on. Greater social and geographical mobility has led to a diminution of social divisions based on the pillars. As will be shown in the next section, these changes have brought with them changes for the schools that receive state funding.

Present position

Within the Netherlands there are currently about 7100 primary schools and about 600 secondary schools. About 69 per cent of primary school pupils and 73 per cent of secondary pupils attend privately controlled schools that are funded by the state (MECS, 1998). The vast majority of these schools are of religious foundation. Less than one per cent of children are in fully private schools and these are mostly international schools teaching a non-Dutch curriculum.

Those private schools that are funded by the state have to acquiesce to a considerable amount of control over their activities. For example, all state-funded schools

follow a range of subjects that are specified by law. Attainment targets and the number of hours to be spent on each subject are also set. While schools are able to choose their own teaching methods, the maximum and minimum number of hours per week for each age group is prescribed. Importantly, this includes instructions that all schools should take account of the multicultural nature of the Netherlands and ensure, for example, that sufficient attention is paid to different religions. Beyond this, in private schools, there can be religious or ideological education but only up to a total of 120 hours per year (van Ham, 1996).

Central government even lays down the dates and length of the summer holidays that are staggered between three large national regions. Each school must produce a 'school plan' which has to be submitted to the Education Inspectorate for approval (van Dorp & van Opdorp, 1992). Although there have been some recent changes towards greater local management of schools, the normal practice is for the government to set and pay directly for all teachers, buildings and school costs. The number of teachers for each school, their salaries, and conditions of work are determined by the government. A very important feature designed to ensure equity is that private schools are not allowed to charge any 'top up' fees, and may only charge (and most state and private schools do) for extra-curricular activities including visits. However, while all teachers have to be qualified to teach, schools do have freedom to appoint their own staff and may use religion and lifestyle as appointing criteria. Further, each major faith has its own Training Colleges licensed to award teaching qualifications. Most of these conditions and constraints are longstanding and have not been seen as too onerous, but recent changes, in particular the requirement for schools to publicize the schools' outcomes or results, are seen by some as more intrusive. There is some debate about this issue as the law is not precise about the form in which the

information should be given. Some authorities, for example the municipality of Amsterdam, publish the test scores of all public schools. The test scores of most private schools are also published but on a voluntary basis. A further recent change is that, following the Education Participation Act1992, all schools are required to establish a participation council of equal numbers staff and parent representatives. In secondary the council consists of equal numbers of staff and of parent and student representatives. This council has several powers of advice and consent. All schools are inspected by the Education Inspectorate, which has been strengthened through the Education Inspectorate (Semi-independent status) Regulations, such that from 1993 it was given greater autonomy to ensure schools' compliance with statutory regulations, and to evaluate the education provided. Since 1998 the Inspectorate has annually published a 'quality card' for each secondary school which includes indicators on national examination performance for the main subjects, the percentage of children repeating grades. Some of this data is given in value-added form with corrections being made for each schools' intake characteristics such as its ethnic minority, socio-economic and intake performance mix. This information has been made public since a newspaper began annually publishing such data.

At the primary level parents and children have considerable choice in the school the child attends. The main differences between private schools and state provided schools is that the private schools can turn away prospective pupils under certain prescribed conditions. However, state provided schools are not allowed to reject any student that applies, and popular state schools are required expand to accept all prospective pupils. Interestingly, this right of all pupils to attend the state school of choice can have an effect on private schools, for if a private school has spare capacity and another school nearby is

popular, the private school may be forced to give up part of the buildings provided for it to the popular school (Hirsch, 1994).

One of the obvious problems of receiving state-funding is that the conditions on which it is given can change. In the Netherlands, as in many countries, there has been increasing concern about the undue cost caused by having a great number of small schools and by attempts to respond to what might be temporary demands (Karsten, 1999). The state will support the establishment of a new religious primary school where a set number of pupils could be guaranteed within a five kilometer radius of the planned site. This number varied according to the population density of the local area but, before 1994, at its highest was 200 for a town of over 100,000, and reduced to just 80 in an area with less than 25,000 inhabitants. As a result of the Establishment and Closure of Schools (Revised Norms) Act, to obtain funding for a primary school, the sponsors still have to show that within five years there will be a minimum number of children attending the school, however, this minimum number of pupils has increased substantially and now varies from 333 in the cities to 200 in rural areas (MECS, 1998). Further, the sponsors have to show that this number is likely to be maintained for a further 15 years after the first five years.

These changes have brought a sharp decline in the number of new schools being opened in the Netherlands. The total number of new primary schools (including municipally provided schools) was 74 in 1990, 67 in 1991 and 55 in 1992. The changes in regulations led to a mere 13 new primary schools in 1993 and just 5 in 1994 (MECS, 1994). An example of the new difficulties of establishing schools is provided by a long running controversy over a proposed Hindu school in The Hague during 1993/94. The sponsors had attracted sufficient pupil numbers for the establishment of a new school under the old regulations, but were unable to guarantee the revised figure of 333. Their application was thus rejected.

This increase in the minimum number of pupils required for state support of new schools has been accompanied by similar changes in the pupil numbers required for continued support of existing schools. The actual figures are complicated and depend upon population density, but are 143 for a 'typical' city and 69 for a sparsely populated area. While these figures are certainly low, there were very many Dutch schools with fewer than the required number of pupils. School closure, which usually means merger of two or more schools into one new one has been a common feature of the recent educational environment. In 1992 there were 99 mergers (the great majority being of two schools), while in 1993 there were 270 mergers. In 1994 this figure was 264, with about twice this number in 1995 as the new minimum figures came into force from 1996. Between 1994 and 1996 the number of primary schools reduced by about 10 per cent (from 8801 to 8082), while the number of secondary schools was cut by nearly 30 per cent (from 1005 to 724). Quite simply, if small schools do not merge, they were forced to close. While many of these mergers have been of schools from within the same denomination, what is interesting is that many have been across religious boundaries. Hirsch (1994: 69) states that, of the schools merging in 1993, 16 per cent involved both state and private schools, 16 per cent were private schools of different denominations and 9 per cent were mergers between Christian schools and secular private schools.

The change in minimum numbers has occurred at a time of declining school rolls and increased secularization. The result is that many religious schools now accept children from many religious backgrounds or none. Hirsch (1994), for example, cites Catholic schools in Rotterdam and the Hague that have a majority of Muslim children. Such changes obviously pose considerable threats to the religious identities of the faith-based schools.

It is also clear that, apart from a religious minority of parents, the religious affiliation of Dutch schools is no longer a major factor in choice. Factors such as proximity and the perceived status of the schools are generally more important and large numbers of parents now make choices that would seem to contradict their religious views (Braster, 1993). However, there is growing evidence that at secondary level private faith-based schools are beginning to produce slightly better academic results than state schools (van Laarhoven et al, 1990; Dronkers, 1995). The effect is small and not uniform and Dronkers argues that this difference is probably due to the deliberate choice by parents and teachers towards such schools helping it to build a school community that performs better. He claims that these educational differences between private and state schools are recent and could be the start of a new form of inequality (Ritzen et al., 1997).

It is difficult to unravel the effects on state-funded religious schools of the growing secularization of the whole community from the effects of that funding and associated control itself. However, there is no doubt that state-funded religious schools in the Netherlands are far more secular than they once were. Indeed, the lack of religious emphasis in these nominally religious schools might be seen as one of the reasons for the decline in religious belief and practice in the wider community. The Dutch Catholic or Protestant churches no longer have significant influence on the curriculum of 'their' schools, and the teaching of religious education has in most religious schools has been reduced to simple factual information about different world views (Dronkers, 1995). Further, while the schools are allowed to select teachers on the basis of their faith, there is a decline in the number of number of teachers in these schools who are themselves religious and in the number of teachers prepared to teach religious education (Karsten et al, 1996).

One current problem, that is increasingly concerning educators and politicians is ethnic segregation in schools. The Netherlands has a growing ethnic minority population. Although only about 9.4 per cent of the whole population are from an ethnic minority, minorities form about 14.5 per cent of the population between 0 and 9. Most of these children are of Moroccan, Turkish or Surinam origin and are very unevenly distributed geographically. In the four largest cities of Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam and Utrecht, ethnic minority children make up approximately half of the student population. While there is no automatic relationship between ethnic origin and religious belief, most of these minorities are more closely identified with Islam than with Christianity, yet the children are to be found in Protestant and Catholic schools as well as public schools (Hermans, 2000). Yet Karsten (1994) claims that at a time when the Netherlands is becoming increasingly multi-cultural, the schools are, paradoxically, becoming less integrated. Once the proportion of ethnic minority children exceeds about 50 per cent, many Dutch parents use their freedom to choose to avoid schools where non-Dutch children form a substantial proportion. This has led to some urban schools being highly ethnically divided (Louis & van Velzen, 1999/91; Eldering, 1997). White Dutch parents have been found to be much more 'mobile' in their choices than most ethnic minority groups and are prepared to take their children to schools outside their neighborhood (Karsten, 1994). In particular, as the majority of ethnic minority children are enrolled in state schools, some private religious schools are now seen as providing 'safe havens' for white pupils. They can perform this function because, although they cannot discriminate in admissions on the basis of ethic origin, they can refuse entry to children on religious grounds. This is causing growing concern such that, for example, in September 2000, in one school in Zwolle where all 42 children are Turkish, the parents protested that they wanted white children in the school as well. At the same time,

parents in Soest campaigned for three of the five state schools in the area to be closed so that their mainly black children could be distributed among other schools (Daruvalla, 2000). This phenomenon of 'white flight' is seen as a problem on both academic and social grounds. There are several studies that have suggested that ethnic segregation has adverse effects on both minority and majority students (Tesser & Mulder, 1990, quoted in Karsten, 1994) as well as being seen as hampering social integration. While the Dutch choice of school legislation makes it difficult to try to decrease segregation, several municipalities have made significant attempts to do so (Karsten, 1994).

Change in the composition of existing schools is, however, only part of what is increasingly seen as a problem of ethnic segregation in schools, for there has been a growth in the number of newly formed Muslim schools (now nearly 30) and Hindu schools (Driessen, 1997; Dwyer and Meyer, 1995). Within the Netherlands, the right for new schools to be funded by the state is no longer seen as having unambiguous merit, but is now viewed as having potential weaknesses as well as benefits.

While the state-funded religious schools in the Netherlands are designated as private schools, the similarly funded schools in England are given no chance of such pretensions. This is in spite of the fact that the churches or charities retain ownership of property. On most aspects, the state-maintained religious schools in England are far more tightly controlled than those in the Netherlands even though the Churches still contribute to the maintenance of the buildings and sometimes provide additional funding and support.

Since the implementation of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act (DFEE, 1998) there have been four different types of school within the state-maintained sector (excluding schools for children with special educational needs). It is possible for religious schools to be any of three types - Voluntary Aided, Foundation or Voluntary Controlled –

listed in descending order of degree of autonomy. The remaining category - community schools - are provided and run by the local education authority. The exact nature of each of these types of school is complex and described in the Act, but all are subject to many regulations and controls and a variety of agencies are able to influence what the schools can do.

One of the most important aspects to note is that the differences between the four types of school are in many ways less important than their similarities. All types of school have to follow the National Curriculum and, following the 1992 Education (Schools) Act, are regularly inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), both of which are far more constraining than their Dutch counterparts. The National Curriculum defines detailed programs of study for each of the NC subjects which has to be followed by each school, but religious education is not a NC subject and is set locally in conjunction with appropriate local religious education committees. Ofsted inspections are similarly conducted in two parts. Most aspects of the school are regularly inspected by secular inspection teams to ensure that the school meets rigid quality standards. The schools have no control over the selection of these inspectors and the results are made public and can have dramatic implications. Religious education and worship, on the other hand, are inspected by inspectors selected by the religious group or denomination and it has been widely claimed that the introduction of such inspections has led to a reconsideration of the religious distinctiveness of religious schools (Francis, 2000).

All state-maintained schools can only appoint fully trained and certified people as teachers, and have to pay them according to a national salary scale. They cannot charge fees. All schools have a delegated budget that they receive through their local education authority. They have to provide information regularly to that LEA on their student intakes, on the

performance of students, on national tests, on exclusions, on absences and on much more. In fact, the School Standards and Framework Act gives considerable powers over all types of schools to the LEA and to their school organization committees and to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment.

There are some differences between the types of school, of course. Foundation and Voluntary Aided schools are exempt charities, which gives them certain financial advantages with voluntary donations and the ownership of property. These two types of school can also determine the dates of the school terms and holidays and the times of the school sessions. More importantly, they are also the employers of staff rather than the LEA, although in most cases the LEA Director for Education is given significant rights to advise the appointing body especially for headteachers and deputy head teachers. The LEA has to be told of such vacancies before any appointment process can commence, and sets staff qualification requirements for each post. The Director of Education can also instigate action where there is serious concern about the performance of the headteacher. To maintain the religious character of faith-based schools all such schools can take into consideration 'a person's ability and fitness to preserve and develop the religious character of the school' when appointing a headteacher (section 60). Additionally, some posts are designated as reserved posts for the teaching of religious education, but there can only be up to a fifth of teachers so designated. In foundation and voluntary controlled schools the rest of the teaching posts are open to all applicants and the governing body cannot discriminate on the basis of their religious faith or lack of it. In contrast, in voluntary aided schools, preference may be given, in connection with the appointment, remuneration or promotion of all teachers at the school, to persons whose religious opinions are in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination of the school. Governing bodies can also take into

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consideration any conduct 'which is incompatible with the precepts, or with the upholding of the tenets, of the religion or religious denomination so specified'.

The structure of the governing bodies also shows a similar continuum of degree of control by the LEA and others over the Foundation. Table 1 (constructed from Schedule 9 of the Act) shows the number of governors of each category for a secondary school with 600 or more students.

Category of governor	Community school	Voluntary controlled school	Foundation school	Voluntary aided school
Parent	6	6	7	3
LEA	5	4	2	2
Teacher	2	2	2	2
Staff	1	1	1	1
Foundation	0	5	5	to make a majority by 3
Co-opted	5	2	3	

Table 1. Number of governors of each category for a secondary school with 600 or more students.

In each case the governing body also includes the headteacher unless he or she chooses not to be a governor, and may in some specified circumstances include other co-opted governors. It is of note that all of the schools now have to have LEA appointees on their governing bodies, and there is no requirement that these nominees are of the same religious faith as the school. It is only with voluntary aided schools that the foundation (usually the Church) can appoint a majority of the governors.

In several aspects the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act can be seen to be more advantageous to the churches than other recent Acts. It abolished grant-maintained status about which the churches were suspicious and allowed previously voluntary controlled

schools to choose to become voluntary aided without financial penalty. It also clarified and usually strengthened the churches' position regarding governing bodies, instruments of governance, religious education, school worship, admissions and staffing (Francis, 2000).

However, the School Standards and Framework Act also gives considerable powers to the Secretary of State for Education and Employment to deal with 'rationalization' of school places. If the number of students in an LEA area reduces, the Secretary of State has powers to give directions to LEAs and governing bodies to bring forward proposals that may well involve the closure of schools. In extreme cases this can mean closure of a faith-based school against its will.

Not all schools seek funding

In England, as has been indicated above, religious schools have long been funded by the state and incorporated within the state-maintained sector. But the types of schools incorporated were, until 1994, limited to those linked to the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist Churches. There were also some Jewish schools. This limitation was largely the result of history, and schools for other religious groups were not legally excluded - it was simply that it was only relatively recently that strong enough pressure for such schools has been evident. In the late 1970s and 1980s several groups of parents and others became dissatisfied with the schools available in the state-maintained sector, and some Muslims and evangelical Christians opened their own private schools. These schools were usually very small, usually well under 100 students, and charged only low fees. They survived through gifts and because the teachers were rarely paid full salaries. The fact that they were small made it particularly difficult to obtain funding as most LEAs at the time were trying to close their own small schools which were seen as expensive. However, there is no doubt that there

was also reluctance to fund Muslim schools in particular as they were seen as potentially ethnically divisive. Islamia School in Brent, London, is a well known example of a Muslim primary school which tried to obtain state funding on the same basis as Catholic or Anglican schools. It was founded in 1982 and first applied for funding in 1986 (Dwyer and Meyer, 1996). The application was first turned down because the buildings were deemed too small to house a viable school. Legal appeals were rejected, until the High Court eventually ruled that there was a 'manifest unfairness' in rejecting the school. However, the Secretary of State for Education still rejected the proposal, this time on the basis that there were surplus places in the area.

By the late 1980s the school was part of a wider campaign to change the law to make it easier to establish new state-maintained schools (Walford, 1995). This campaign was highly influential in making changes to the 1993 Education Act that made it possible for minority faith schools to enter the maintained sector as a new type of (what was then) grant-maintained school funded by central government. What is of interest is that, while it became possible for a variety of faith-based schools to be funded, only one evangelical Christian school applied and, so far, the only new minority faith schools to apply and be accepted are three Muslim (including Islamia), one Seventh Day Adventist and one Sikh school (Walford, 2000). Some Jewish schools have also been established under this legislation, but similar Jewish schools have long been funded by the state. Under the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act these schools have now become voluntary aided schools and are subject to the same restrictions and controls as all other similar schools.

Given that there are still some 60 evangelical Christian schools and 20 Muslim schools in England and that they had been part of a campaign to obtain funding, there has been an unexpected reluctance to apply. In recent research I have visited several Muslim and

evangelical Christian schools, in part, to try to understand why they have not applied for state funding. The reasons are complex, but focus on the constraints under which the schools feel they would have to operate both now and potentially in the present. There is a particular fear that while the conditions may be acceptable now, future governments may make changes with which they would be unable to agree. They fear that, having received funding, it would be impossible in practice to move back to private status.

Even before gaining the new way of entering the state-maintained sector, some schools were skeptical of the advantages. For example, in my early research (Poyntz and Walford 1994), one headteachers of a private evangelical Christian schools refused to answer a questionnaire, but sent a letter that made his views clear:

> My stand point, had I filled in the questionnaire, would have soon be clear as one who would not tolerate government interference on the issue of education. I believe most Christian schools are set up to be independent and thus able to follow what they believe is the best route to follow. Any compromise on this idealism (i.e. teaching evolution as fact, deviant sex education, acceptance of other faiths as alternatives etc.) would soon weaken their stand and nullify their reason for existence. Any move by government to enforce the national curriculum would have to be resisted, preferably in a united manner, and (though I have no love of law courts and their expense) through the law courts. Any acceptance of Government funds is an immediate weakening of the independent status of schools, and is not acceptable in any circumstances. How can one realistically accept money from a governing body and then refuse its requests.

At that point, in 1993, he was at an extreme, but the concerns expressed in his letter have gradually spread to the other schools (Walford, 1997, 1998). At present in England private schools do not have to follow the National Curriculum or take part in new developments such as the literacy hour or numeracy hour for primary school children. But uncertainty and fear of the future exists. The immediate concerns of this headteacher are now echoed by many others. At present evolution can and should be taught as a theory in the National Curriculum, sex education is a matter for the governors of each school to determine, and religious education does not have to teach that all faiths are equally valid. The Roman

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Catholic schools, in particular, certainly do not teach this, and the religious education curriculum is subject to local determination. But the fear amongst these schools is that the position may change. Fears actually seem to have increased since the 1997 Labour government took control as, while it has relaxed the National Curriculum in many ways, this has led to a concentration on 'the basics' of English and mathematics to the partial exclusion of many other subjects. Apart from believing that education is rather broader than 'the basics', the change has emphasized that if they accepted funding they might be at the mercy of any whim of any future government about what they should teach.

One Headteacher of a well-established private evangelical Christian school that had been active in the original campaign explained to me in 1999:

> I think the difficulty is that government has a problem as well just handing money over without control, or some degree of influence on what is happening, or monitoring what is happening, in that it could be deemed to be very irresponsible. On the other hand, the Grant Maintained status and conditions, so far as I've studied them, would mean for us - and we've thought about it - a serious risk of us selling our birthright [...]. There are certain conditions attached to it - you couldn't have corporal punishment, which from time to time is used in this school, and which from time to time we'll continue to use - where legally permissible - and obviously that's an issue. It's not a major issue to my mind, it's not on top of the list in importance. The requirement to follow the national curriculum is another issue. Fundamentally, we don't have too many problems with the national curriculum as it stands, but who knows what is going to be asked when it comes to the national curriculum in three years' time or five years' time. And assuming there is freedom as far as R.E. and morally religious teaching is concerned, who knows, they could seek to curtail those freedoms. If we then decide, we're not happy, we can't go back, we can't suddenly say we'll turn the clock back and become an independent school again. You've given it away, you've got to go and find a new site and start from scratch again. So I think we felt the normal hesitation about going down that route, and the Trustees have thought about these things and decided that if we feel very clearly that it's the right God-directed route for us to take, we would be willing to do it, but we haven't felt that. It's tempting, because of some of the financial and material ease that it might bring, but it would be a compromise.

The issue of corporal punishment is an interesting one. Most of these Christian schools believe that it is sometimes appropriate to use corporal punishment in the same way that parents are, they believe, commanded to chastise their own children. It is very infrequently

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used, but was seen as one of the advantages of private status. When corporal punishment was eventually made illegal in English state-maintained schools in 1986, private schools retained the right if parents agreed. In fact, a year after this interview, in September 2000, it also became illegal to use corporal punishment in private schools (Parker-Jenkins, 1999). This is an example of the state increasingly controlling private schools whether or not they are state funded and will be discussed further in the next section.

In the Netherlands it is now almost unthinkable to try to start a school without state funding. Because the state has supported a variety of schools for so long, those who wish to start a new school almost automatically assume that their school should be state funded. There is a strong reluctance amongst parents to pay school fees, so that the option of starting a fee-paying is rarely considered. The 28 Islamic schools in the Netherlands are all supported by the state and thus have to conform to government regulations and controls. One consequence of this dependence on state funding is that, where legal or administrative problems have beset particular initiatives for new schools, they have simply not opened. An example of this can be seen in the establishment of a new evangelical Christian school in Arnhem.

Although it is generally thought to be relatively easy to start a new school in the Netherlands as long as minimum numbers are met, it is also necessary to show that the proposed school will be of a different type to those already existing within a five kilometer radius of the site. While there were local objections to several of the Dutch Muslim schools now funded by the state, it was usually relatively easy for them to show that the proposed school was of a type that did not already exist in the neighborhood. Not so with the evangelical Christian schools. As is discussed in detail elsewhere (Walford, 2001), a proposed evangelical Christian school in Arnhem was only finally funded after a 9 year battle which

included an appeal to the highest national court. In this final decision, in 1997, it was agreed that the type of evangelical Christian school which the promoters wished to open was indeed different from other Christian schools nearby, and that evangelical Christianity should for the purposes of schooling be considered as a separate 'denomination' within the system (van Ham, 1996). Since that time there have been a few more evangelical Christian schools opened and more are planned, however a few of those involved in similar schools are skeptical of the benefits of state funding and one group has recently established non-state-maintained Christian schools.

In an interview with those involved in this very small new evangelical Christian school I asked whether they would be applying for state funding. I was told:

> No way. Because if we want money from the government, there are all kinds of rules. The rules are not always bad, but if it stops our vision, then it's not good, and it's not the will of God. And we fear God more than the government. God will help us with money, and we have some ideas how to get the money we need. The parents pay for their children because it's private, but it's not expensive. We price it so low so that everyone can come. Our aim is to give the children a good school in which the teachers and leaders of the school fear God and want to do the will of God, for the sake of the children. That's part of the vision, if we stop that, then a couple of years later, we'll be a normal school that says it is Christian, but isn't. In addition, we can't let a teacher into the school who isn't a Christian, it isn't possible.

This last concern is of central importance to both Dutch and English Christian schools. They wish to have complete control over the teachers appointed and to be able to dismiss them if their personal conduct does not match those deemed to be necessary. A particular concern is with the sexual and moral behavior of teachers, thus one evangelical Christian school had dismissed a teacher who had become pregnant before marriage even though she married before the birth. All were clear that they would never appoint a homosexual teacher. Remaining established as a private school gave more control to the school over such decisions but, as will be seen in the next section, even where the schools take no funding from the state this does not mean that they can act completely autonomously.

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Regulation of private schools

In the sections above it has been shown that there has been increasing regulation and control on faith-based schools that are funded by the state. The extent of control has increased rapidly over the past few years as both English and Dutch governments have become more concerned with the efficiency and effectiveness of schooling and with 'raising standards'. In particular, both countries now have an inspection system that has considerable power.

In it worth noting that these changes have not been without influence on the private schools that have not received any specific funding from the state. The drive to 'raise standards' can be seen throughout most of Europe, and it has had both direct and indirect effects on the autonomy of full private schools.

In the Netherlands, there are only a few schools that serve Dutch children which are not funded by the state. However, over the last few years there has been a slight increase (to 8) in the number of full private secondary schools with quite high fees. These schools are able to set their own examinations rather than take the state examinations, and may be seen as a slight move towards elitism.

We have seen that in most aspects the degree of regulation on all schools is less than in England, and the extent of control on full private schools is even lower. But some controls remain beyond those involving health, safety and the wider law of the land. For all schools, the buildings must be of the required standard with the appropriate facilities. As all children have to have a couple of hours of physical education each week, this means that all schools have to have their own gymnasium or have regular access to one. All schools also have to have a learning plan that lays out the broad curriculum to be followed by the school.

While this offers some flexibility, there are still fixed points for the age at which children should be able to read and do forth. Every school has to cover the full range of subjects.

Another significant control comes from the fact that the Netherlands has a compulsory schooling law (most recently updated as the Compulsory Education Act 1969) rather than, as England, one that makes education compulsory. Following amendments in 1971 and 1981, full-time schooling is compulsory from 5 to 16 and at least one day per week until 18. This means that homeschooling is rare and can only be done where the parent is a trained teacher. In the same way, all teachers at non-state-funded private schools must be trained. This severely restricts who can be employed. But, within this, schools are free to discriminate in employment and in the selection of children on the basis is religious faith and personal behavior. All Dutch schools are also inspected, but the level of inspection for full private schools is formally lower than for state-funded schools. There is currently a debate about the perceived intrusive nature of such inspections.

In England private schools have to abide by similar controls over buildings, health and safety. They are also subject to what are called 'registration visits' carried out on behalf of the Secretary of State by members of Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools working within the independent schools section of Ofsted. It is thus a different system to that for state-maintained schools are the results of these inspections are not made public as are those for maintained schools (however, full inspections can also be made where deemed necessary and these reports are public). These inspections are less onerous than those conducted directly by Ofsted, but the results can be just as dramatic. At worst, the Secretary of State has the power to close any private school if parts of the school premise are deemed unsuitable, if efficient and suitable instruction is not being provided, if the headteacher or any other

employee has been convicted of child abuse, or if a child in local authority care in the school has not been properly cared for (Partington et al, 1998).

The most well-known recent case where Inspectors recommended closure of a private school was that of Summerhill, the world famous school established by A. S. Neill (1962, 1966) and still run by his daughter. Neill's libertarian philosophy, on which the school is still run, is in direct conflict with an era of compulsory curriculum and regular testing of children. Neill believed that there was no point in trying to teach a child who did not want to learn. Instead, the child should make an active choice to learn, and be free to decide whether or not to attended lessons. The Department of Education and Employment expressed continued concern over the school and inspected it almost every year for a period of eight years. The complaints varied over the period and included infamous nude bathing and the fact that children of both sexes and the staff used the same toilets - the school only has 60 students aged 10 to 17. The inspectors said that the standards were too low, pupils' progression to slow, and the curriculum too narrow. In 1999 inspectors ordered that lessons should be made compulsory. Supported by parents, an independent, very positive inquiry conducted by prominent educationalists and an army of eminent Neill disciples the case went to High Court in March 2000. The school won and the Secretary of State was forced to accept that lessons should remain voluntary, but the school was left with a legal bill of over £100,000 that it can ill afford.

For this one private school that has successfully kept to its original mission there are thousands which have gradually succumbed to pressure for increased academic success at the expense of wider educational aims. Private schools do not have to follow the national curriculum, but pressures from parents and inspectors, as well as the demands of external examinations, mean that very few follow anything very different. The 1992 Education

(Schools) Act gave new powers to the Secretary of State to require all schools (including private schools) to provide information designed to assist parents in choosing schools for their children and, as is made explicit within the Act itself, to 'increase public awareness of the quality of the education provided by the schools concerned and of the educational standards achieved in those schools' (HMSO, 1992: 11). Private schools are now listed in 'league tables' along with all other schools and the pressure to emphasize those aspects of schooling that can be measured and enumerated has increased.

In both England and the Netherlands there are also fears that European legislation will have an increasing influence on all schools. The right to use physical punishment was eventually removed from all schools because the British government believed that to retain it would be in contradiction with the European Convention on Human Rights. In October 2000, that Convention was brought into English and Welsh law which means that legal challenges can be made far more quickly. Some schools are concerned that this Human Rights Act 2000 will mean that they will not be able to discriminate in employment in cases where, for example, they find that a teacher is unmarried yet in a sexual relationship, or is homosexual, or who no longer adheres to the faith of the school. The British National secular Society takes this one stage further for it believes that the current exemption allowing church schools to take account of employees' faith when considering appointments, promotion and dismissals may breach the human rights of people with other faiths and none. All this is yet to be tested.

Conclusion

Many US advocates of state funding for faith-based schools have looked to Europe and, in particular, the Netherlands as a model to be followed. In attempting to generate

support for a change in domestic policy, it is unsurprising that they have tended to emphasize positive aspects of these educational systems and have been less forthcoming about any potential problems that such funding might bring. In part this may be due to lack of knowledge, in part political expediency, yet it would be tragic to be successful in obtaining funding only to find that such funding brings more problems than it solves.

This paper has outlined some of the policy changes that have impacted on faith-based schools in England and the Netherlands. It has shown the variety of ways in which these two states have increasingly regulated and controlled faith-based schools that have obtained state funding, and showed that in both countries there is some concern about the wisdom of a growing dependence on the state.

The fate of the English voluntary schools over a period of more than 50 years is instructive where, since 1944, three interlinked trends are evident. First, the proportion of funding that the government requires the schools to contribute to the capital and maintenance costs of the school buildings has gradually reduced. It now stands at 15 per cent for Voluntary Aided schools. Second, the schools have become increasingly regulated and controlled by the state such that their distinctiveness has declined. Third, they have become increasingly secularized. Whilst being more true of the Church of England schools, which are often hardly distinguishable from Local Education Authority schools, it is also true for Catholic schools (Arthur, 1995; McLaughlin et al., 1996). Many of the teachers and students in these religious schools no longer adhere to the beliefs of the founding church, and religious practice within the schools is often restricted to a brief assembly and the compulsory study of religious education by the students. Very similar changes can be seen in the religious schools in the Netherlands which, most would argue, usually have even less religious emphasis than their English counterparts.

This decline in the emphasis given to religion in nominally religious schools gives a clue as to why some parents and churches still sometimes wish to start their own new private schools. While the full reasons for starting such schools are complex, one factor is certainly that, as the available state-maintained schools become more secular, so they become less attractive for those parents who have their religious belief at the center of their lives. Two such groups of parents are some of those with a fundamentalist/evangelical Christian faith and some of those with a Muslim faith. In both England and the Netherlands many private schools have been started from these two faith groups. In England all such evangelical Christian schools remain private, while three of the Muslim schools have entered the state-maintained system and the remainder are private. In the Netherlands practically all schools of both types receive funding from the state.

However, it has also been shown that, in Europe at least, the state has instituted increased regulation and control of all schools - whether or not they receive state funding. Fully private schools are not immune from control over what they do. Some aspects of European law may now even override national law on some education-related issues in the same way that Federal law challenges State law in the USA.

This paper has not been able directly to answer questions about what might be the effects of state funding in the USA, for the economic, social and cultural history of the USA differs greatly from both of these European countries and the details of funding and regulation are central to any positive or negative effects. But it has provided an account of some past and present developments in these two countries that may be of use to both US advocates and their opponents. Clearly the tune played by the piper is modified by he who pays and, in some cases, the original tune is now hardly recognizable.

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